

WINSTON PREPARATORY SCHOOL

# Integrated Design Services, Master Plan, and Invasive Species Management for Winston Preparatory School

Norwalk, Connecticut



Bioretention garden on the Winston campus

The 13-acre campus of the Winston Preparatory School was once a grand 19th century estate. In later years, it became home to a reformatory school, and later, a daycare facility. Peppered with both derelict buildings and intriguing relics, the campus also contained a spring-fed, concrete-lined, algae-covered swimming pool. When the school acquired funding for a new classroom building, they assembled an integrated design/construction team to help establish and realize a new vision for the campus. The team played a key role in transforming Winston’s learning environment into one that not only fostered students’ academic education, but their

understanding of the school’s “place” and its role in the ecological health of the region.

The project began with a series of visioning charrettes with staff, faculty and students. The group collectively envisioned a state-of-the-art, ecologically sustainable classroom and landscape that would enhance the community, local ecology, and the students’ understanding of how water leaving the campus could actually affect the health of Long Island Sound.

Biohabitats performed an ecological inventory and analysis which informed the siting of the classroom building and parking. This assessment also

*A multi-faceted campus transformation that enhances learning and ecology is completed without finalized construction documents well within a tight schedule and budget.*

resulted in the preparation of an invasive species and forest management plan. Biohabitats helped develop a site plan which located new buildings and paved areas on previously disturbed lands, minimized impervious cover, and addressed stormwater management holistically. Green infrastructure practices, such as bioswales, bioretention filters, a dry detention basin, an infiltration gallery, replacement of turf with low maintenance native plantings, and conversion of the algae laden “swimming pool” to a vegetated wet pond BMP. Biohabitats was responsible for all regulatory coordination with the local wetlands board for the conversion of the swimming pool, a regulated waterbody, as well as the associated wetland buffer encroachments.

Due to a compressed project schedule, and a move-in date dictated by the start of

the school year, construction began with little more than the entitlement drawings required for site plan and building permit approval. Working very closely with the construction management team, Biohabitats’ designers prepared detailed concept drawings, sometimes while in the field, in order to stay on schedule. With the original design goals and concept in mind, many site details were altered or new details created to reuse vast amounts of rock found during site excavation. The landscape design incorporated over 200 native tree, shrub, grass, perennial and annual wildflower species.

## SERVICES

- Inventory & Assessment
- Site Planning
- Green Infrastructure
- Site & Landscape Design
- Construction Oversight
- Regulatory Coordination
- Permitting

*conservation planning  
ecological restoration  
regenerative design*



800.220.0919  
www.biohabitats.com

